

Her white, painted face ghastly as the mask  
of a kabuki dancer. We served tepid tea

With a small spoon of Jamaican rum.  
This old house had long been a house of

Women. Was it a lady who had once pissed  
in the only obvious convenience some dark

Night in bone-deep frost, not braving the shit-  
house in the patio out-back. The tea had

A certain perspicacity hardly explained by  
the copper canker inside the pot. Bulltoven

Was not an Ahab, nor yet an Ishmael. If  
you had to brand his ass, it would be

A J.C. plain -- no copper-plate, no flourishes.  
His ship ran upon a shoal, or else was

Scuttled. Was it sand or humid jungle ...  
how humid that jungle was, inside my brain

Though the samovar would not steam. A penchant  
for hoarded marital favors. Had I had a condom

Over my head, would Bulltoven ever have broken through?

I HAD THOUGHT OF THIS CAMP-OUT ENGAGE-

Ment as a sort of act of mercy. Like all  
acts of mercy, it was to get my goat

Before it was finished with. If you  
are crossing a river at flood-tide on the

Back of a crocodile -- chances are you know  
this Aesopian homily as well as I

Do. As between the two of us on this  
camp-out romp, who is the crocodile?

This is the question. I will only relate  
the dispassionate facts. Except for her

Sprained ankle, this bitch was quite a  
hiker. Except for her sprained butt, she

Was "something else" as they say when it comes  
sacking-out time. Even with her sprained



Tongue her sentimentality was about like that  
of a Homeric siren, to borrow a Huxleyian

Similie -- that's all I'll say.

THIS IS THE NUB OF IT, YOU FORCE YOUR WILL

On others because of their need. Is this  
politics, or is it economics? Is it education

Or is it religion? Is this the nub of it? Who  
is without will, and who is with need? The wolf

Weans her young. She trains them not to shit  
the lair. The wolf does not rape his females

They like us are a community kind. Where are we? What  
is the difference? Pound was right, the broker

Is the great evil one. But why the obsession with  
economics? The broker has his claw and his fang

Or his clacking tongue in on every human insti-  
tution. Pound was wrong. The broker was

Only by chance a Jew. The broker is,  
by human design, you --

You being human.

AN ARCHING GROSSNESS OF UNCUT STEMS IS

The only battlefield I have known. I've shot  
them all dead with me eyes closed -- Shut-Eye

Dick. If they had poked me would they have  
known I was only a possum? The defoliated

Jungle. Do you castrate the enemy among all  
the punk and dead leaves, the spores great

As puff-balls? Eyes fixed, glazed -- absorbing  
all the light, reflecting nothing. It's no

Mirror I'll find my rusticated retreat re-  
flected out of, much less my soul, so-

Called. I'm not wanting to be known as  
a castrater of corpses -- even this self-